

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 04125 151203Z
ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY
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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 04125

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: BRITISH TALKING POINTS FOR FRONT-
LINE CAPITALS

REF: LONDON 102 AND 4037

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH PATRICK LAVER EVENING OF
MARCH 14, EMBASSY OFFICER WAS SHOWN DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS
TO UK HIGH COMMISSIONERS IN FRONTLINE CAPITALS WHICH
BRIEFLY RECOUNT OWEN'S MEETINGS HERE WITH THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT AND ASK FOR FRONTLINE ADVICE IN VIEW OF THE
INTRANSIGENCE OF THE FRONT. WE UNDERSTAND THE BRITISH
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WILL SEEK DEPARTMENT'S CLEARANCE
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FOR TALKING POINTS.

2. IN POINT (III), OF THE DRAFT, THE FCO SAYS THAT
THE FRONT CLAIMS TO ACCEPT THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS
AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS BUT IN FACT HAS REJECTED
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN. EMBASSY OFFICER SAID
THIS SEEMED UNNECESSARILY INTERPRETIVE. NKOMO AND

MUGABE INSIST THEY HAVE NOT REJECTED OUR PLAN. ON THE CONTRARY, THEY SAY THEY HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING WITHIN OUR FRAMEWORK, AND THEIR DISAGREEMENT OR ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS REJECTION, AT LEAST NOT UNTIL THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED. TO THEM, MALTA WAS PART OF A CONTINUING NEGOTIATION, NOT A SHOWDOWN.

3. IN POINT (IV), THE FCO SAYS IT WOULD BE "FRUITLESS" TO PURSUE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT'S PROPOSAL THAT WE SHOULD RESUME THE TALKS ADJOURNED AT MALTA. EMBASSY OFFICER SUGGESTED THAT HOWEVER ANOTHER CONFERENCE MAY BE ARRANGED, IT WILL HAVE TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FRONT'S UNIQUE POSITION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, PARTICULARLY ITS SPECIAL STATUS IN MILITARY AFFAIRS AND IN WORLD OPINION. FOR THE FRONT, A NEW CONFERENCE WOULD HAVE TO BE DESIGNED IN SOME FASHION AS A FOLLOW-UP TO OR EXPANSION FROM MALTA. THE FCO LANGUAGE APPEARS TO WRITE OFF THE MALTA PROCESS.

4. IN POINT (V), THE FCO REFERS TO THE CURRENT "IMPASSE" AND ITS BELIEF THAT "THE ONLY OPTION LEFT TO US IS TO LET OUR PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING OF ALL THE PARTIES LIE ON THE TABLE." EMBASSY OFFICER ARGUED THAT THIS SORT OF LANGUAGE REFLECTED AN ATTITUDE OF RESIGNATION WHICH THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS OFTEN FIND UNACCEPTABLE

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AND MIGHT INTERPRET AS PASSIVE RECOGNITION OF THE SALISBURY AGREEMENT.

5. LAVER DID NOT DISAGREE WITH THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SUGGESTIONS. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE TALKING POINTS REPRESENTED THE FOREIGN SECRETARY'S THINKING AND HE ASSUMED THE CABLE WOULD GO OUT TO WASHINGTON SHORTLY.

BREWSTER

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